

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 1, 2, 56, and 57, claims 3 to 50 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Allowed Claims

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 3 to 13, 15, 16, and 21 to 50.

III. Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 14, 17, 19, 20, 56, and 57 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Regarding the rejection of claims 1, 2, 14, 17, 19, 20, 56, and 57 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), although the merits of this rejection are not necessarily agreed with, claims 1, 2, 56, and 57 have been canceled herein without prejudice, claim 14 has been amended herein without prejudice to depend from claim 3, which has been allowed, and claim 17 has been amended herein without prejudice to reflect the cancellation of claims 1 and 2. As such, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Rejection of Claim 18 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Regarding the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), claim 18 depends from claim 17, which, as indicated above, has been amended herein without prejudice to reflect the cancellation of claims 1 and 2. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the present rejection is moot. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 28, 2009

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